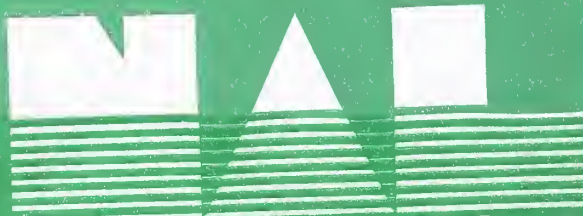


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ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS NEAR ARROYO HONDO
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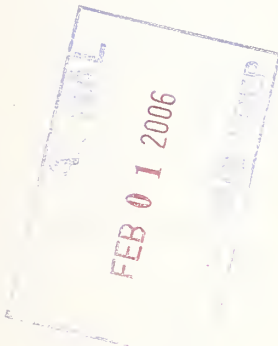
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ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS NEAR ARROYO HONDO
CARSON NATIONAL FOREST, NEW MEXICO

By Ann A. Loose

Abstract

Eight Valdez Phase sites excavated by the University of New Mexico Field School near Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico, are described. The sites consist of pithouses and associated surface structures (with one exception) and the ceramic component as well as ceramic analyses indicate they are earlier than other Valdez Phase sites investigated in the Taos District. The presence of Red Mesa B/W pottery as well as suggested similarities between these sites and the Navajo Reservoir District underline the need for further research concerning both temporal and spatial relationships in the Taos District.

Introduction

As defined by Wetherington (1964:4), the Taos District is bounded on the south by the Pueblo River, on the east by the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, on the west by the Rio Grande and on the north by Red River (Fig. 1).

The Rio Hondo is approximately nine miles north of Taos, originating in the Sangre de Cristos and flowing southwest into the canyon of the Rio Grande. The sites to be discussed lie north of the Rio Hondo and south of Lobo Mountain, approximately five miles east of the Rio Grande.

During the summers of 1965 and 1967, the University of New Mexico Field School, under the direction of Dr. J. J. Brody, excavated eight sites near Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico. These sites were located within an area circumscribed on the southeast by the Rio Hondo and on the northwest by the D. H. Lawrence Ranch. One site was located on the north bank of the Rio Hondo, three and six tenths miles below the town of Valdez; while the rest were located within a mile of each other along a ridge above Lobo Creek (a tributary of Rio Hondo), two miles southwest of the D. H. Lawrence Ranch. The sites range in altitude from a low of 7200' at the Rio Hondo to a high of 8200' near the Hawk Ranch (Fig. 2).

All of the sites are within the Upper Sonoran lifezone (Wooten and Standley 1915) although the vegetation surrounding each site may show some Riparian or Transition zone characteristics, depending upon exact location. Characteristic Upper Sonoran vegetation in the

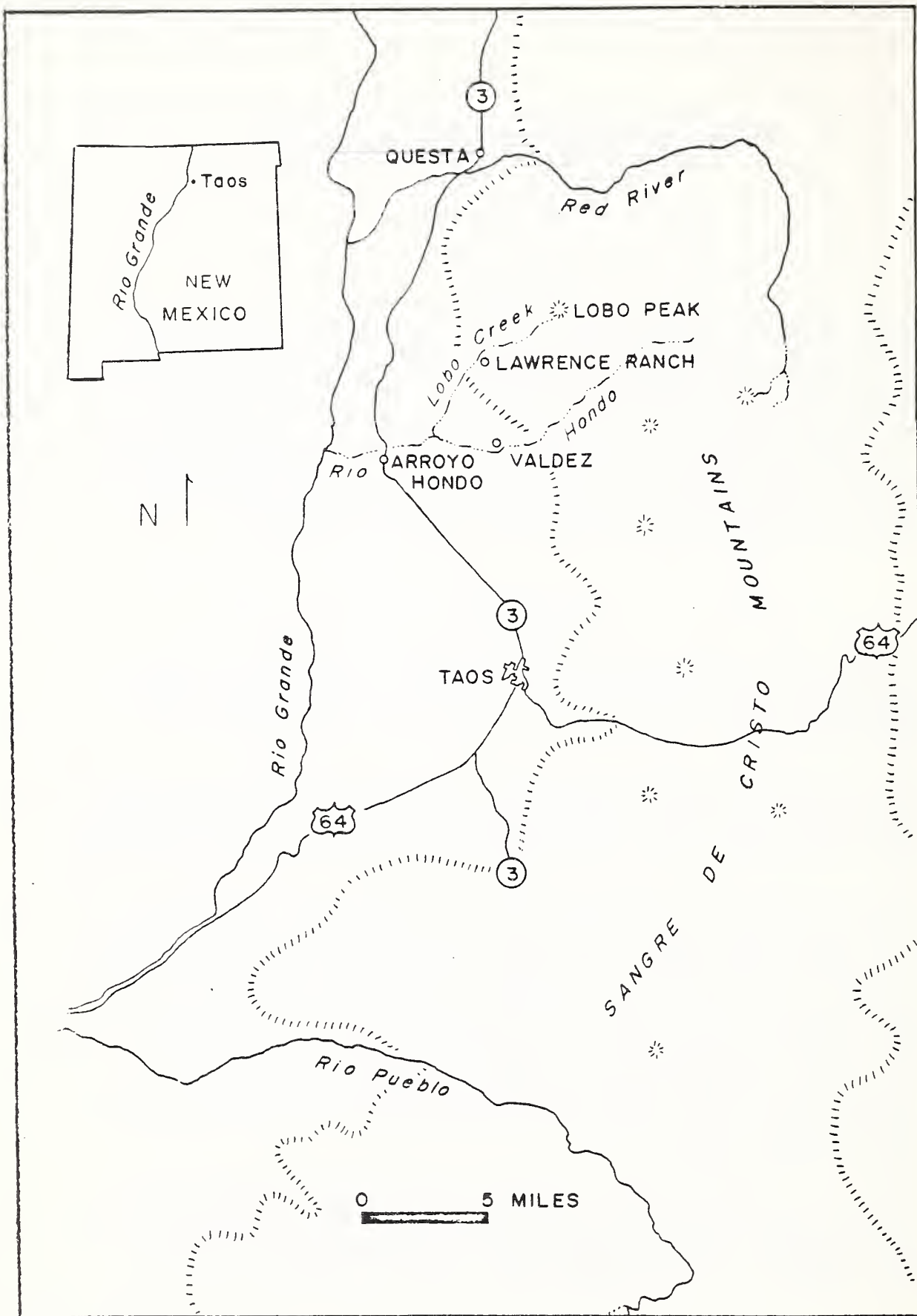


FIGURE 1 - Map of Taos District

in the Arroyo Hondo area includes: pinon (Pinus sp.), juniper (Juniperus spp.), gramma grass (Bouteloua spp.), prickly pear (Opuntia sp.), and sage (Artemisia sp.), especially in those areas cleared for grazing. The Riparian adaptation near Rio Hondo is characterized by a preponderance of such bushes as squawberry (Rhus sp.), blueberry (Vaccinium sp.) and some deciduous trees. The sites at higher elevations are characterized by some transitional flora such as scrub oak (Quercus sp.) and occasional ponderosa (Pinus ponderosa).

Common fauna include deer (Cervidae), porcupine (Erethizontidae), ground squirrel (Citellus), rabbit (Lepus), fox (Vulpus), coyote (Canis latrans) and skunk (Mephitis).

Site Locations

LA 9200, located on the Hawk Ranch, is at an altitude of 8250', and lies about 50' west of Lobo Creek (for location of this and following sites see Fig. 2). The site is within a clearing with a gentle slope towards the creek. Pinon and juniper lie below the site while ponderosa are scattered in the vicinity.

One mile away, also on Lobo Creek, are LA 9203 and LA 9204, both at an elevation of 7900'. They lie within a sagebrush flat which slopes gently toward Lobo Creek. A dense forest of mixed conifers is present. Four-tenths of a mile further down Lobo Creek is LA 9205 (7680' elevation). It lies in dense forest cover west of Lobo Creek. LA 9207 and LA 9208 both lie west of LA 9205 along the 7720' contour line. LA 9207 is approximately three-tenths of a mile from LA 9205 while LA 9208 is a mile away from LA 9205. Both occur in a gently sloping forest environment, as does LA 9206.

LA 9201 is situated on the north bank of the Rio Hondo, five-tenths of a mile upstream from its confluence with Lobo Creek. Sitting on the first terrace above the river, at an altitude of 7200', it overlooks bottomland to the south. An alluvial fan formed by Gallina Wash is just to the east. This is an ideal location for agriculture with the river having formed a small valley containing rich bottomland suitable for agriculture.

All of the excavated sites along Lobo Creek lie on a single ridge, and this ridge contains an almost continuous scatter of lithic debris. A large sage clearing covering the center of the ridge was investigated for evidence of agricultural use (including rock alignments, field houses, etc), but none was found. No definite sites were located in the arroyo near the creek bed, with the exception

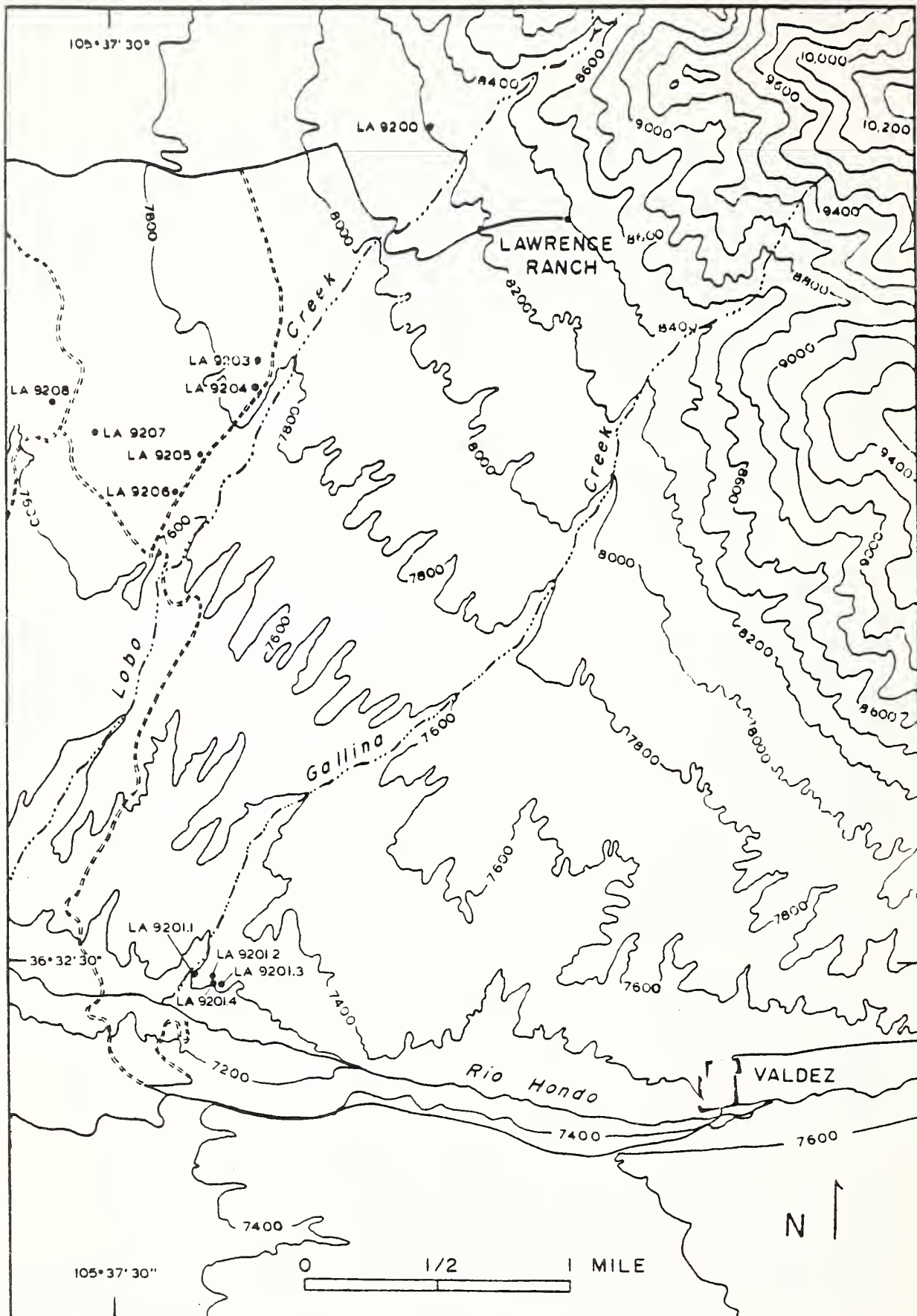


FIGURE 2 - Map of Study Area Showing Site Locations

of a possible cist washing out of the north bank of the V-shaped middle fork of Lobo Creek.

Architecture

LA 9200 - (Fig. 3)

This was a complex of surface and subterranean structures. An "L" shaped three room structure and a rectangular pithouse were excavated. The foundations of the three surface rooms and the cross wall between rooms 1 and 2 were of cobbles, while the other walls were of adobe. A small pit had been excavated near the corner where the rooms joined, but the excavators were unable to determine whether or not this was the result of previous attempts at excavation.

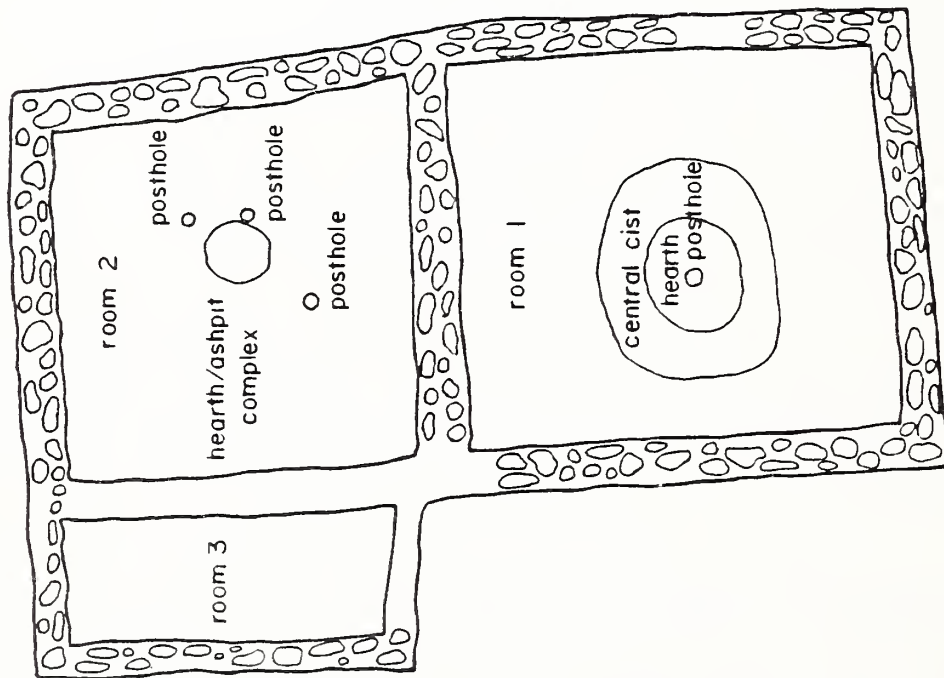
Room 1 features included a possible doorway along the east wall, two central firepits (superimposed), a hard packed adobe floor, and a circular sub-floor cist. Evidence for a single post supporting the pithouse roof was found in the form of a slight depression within the cist (see Wetherington 1966 for a discussion of such posts). Beam casts in the upper fill of the cist indicated roof construction. The cist apparently predated the construction of the surface unit since both firepits were constructed into the top of the filled cist. Another possibility is that Room 1 was originally constructed for storage and later converted into a living area.

Room 2 showed no evidence of a doorway, however, the east wall was only eight inches high and might have contained one. Architectural features included an adobe-lined hearth/ashpit complex in the center of the adobe floor and three small postholes.

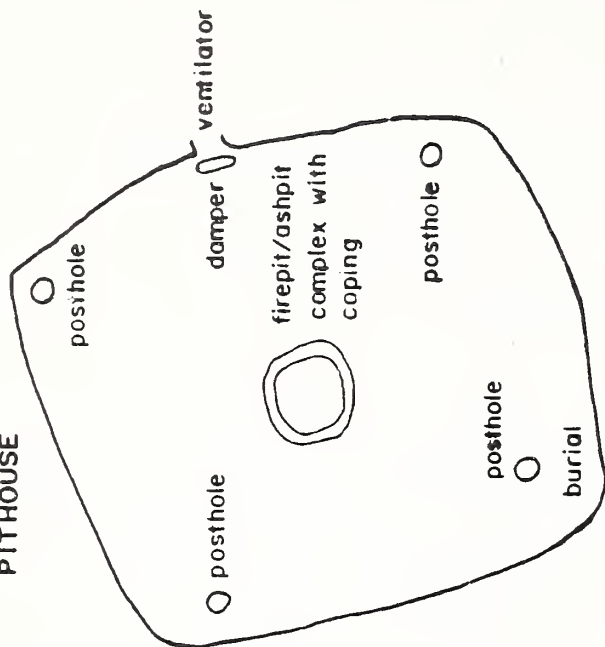
Room 3 was featureless. Wall configurations suggested that Room 1 had been constructed first, followed by a single unit later divided into rooms 2 and 3. It is possible that the wall between Rooms 2 and 3 may never have extended to ceiling height and that what has been called Room 3 may have been only a storage bin at the west end of Room 2.

The rectangular pithouse accompanying the surface structure was dug approximately eight feet into sterile soil. A thin layer of adobe plaster covered the floor and walls. Four corner roof supports, a ventilator with a stone damper in the east wall, and an adobe-lined, circular firepit/ashpit complex with a coping completed the pithouse. The remains of a ladder pole indicated a hatch entrance. In the southwest corner of the floor a cairn of large unmodified boulders had been erected over a burial. Other scattered boulders lay below the ladder.

SURFACE STRUCTURE



PITHOUSE



LA 9200

N

5 FEET

FIGURE 3 - LA 9200 Pithouse and Surface Structure

LA 9201 - (Fig. 4)

This site, divided by a nameless wash, included five pithouses and at least three surface structures. Two of the pithouses had been excavated and the other three trenched by Blumenschein (1958). Surface indications included sherds and other materials washing from low mounds. Each mound surrounded a slight depression about 20 feet in diameter.

LA 9201-01 - The only circular pithouse of the five, LA 9201-01 had been dug eight and a half feet into sterile soil and the walls then plastered with adobe. The thinly plastered floor was poorly preserved. Features included a ventilator in the east wall, a circular adobe-lined and collared firepit just east of center and four roof support holes. A ring of unworked boulders encircled the pit above the walls, and an olla and bowl (both Taos Grey) were found between this ring and the pit walls. This raised the possibility that a storage area had existed under the roof, but beyond the wall limits (Fig. 5).

LA 9201-02 - Blumenschein (1958) had trenched this pithouse to the floor on an east-west axis, and had recovered parts of a human burial. Fragments uncovered by the 1965 field session probably belonged to this burial. The site was otherwise undisturbed.

This small square pithouse had been excavated into sterile soil for a depth of eight feet. Features included four corner roof support holes, a ventilator with damper in the east wall. A firepit/ashpit/deflector complex (with adobe coping), ladder hole and sipapu (?) occurred in the floor along an east-west axis. The walls were unplastered. The floor was of hard puddled adobe, polished, black, and up to two inches thick (Fig. 5).

LA 9201-03 and 04 - A pithouse and associated surface structure was designated LA 9201-03 and 04. Before excavation the pithouse was indicated by a low mound with a depressed center and the surface structure appeared as an alignment of rocks along an east-west axis, west of the pithouse. Blumenschein (1958) had trenched the pithouse to the floor along an east-west axis in 1957 (Fig. 6).

The surface unit LA 9201-04 appeared to have been a one room structure with an adobe plastered floor and thin adobe walls on a cobble base. Preservation was poor, with only the cobbles of the north wall still in position, and the thinly plastered floor and a circular firepit partly lined with stones remaining as features.

The square pithouse was eight feet deep. Walls and floor were plastered. The central circular firepit (with adobe coping) had a ladder pole socket to the east. A circular ashpit lay to the west.

LA 9201

N ↑

100 FEET

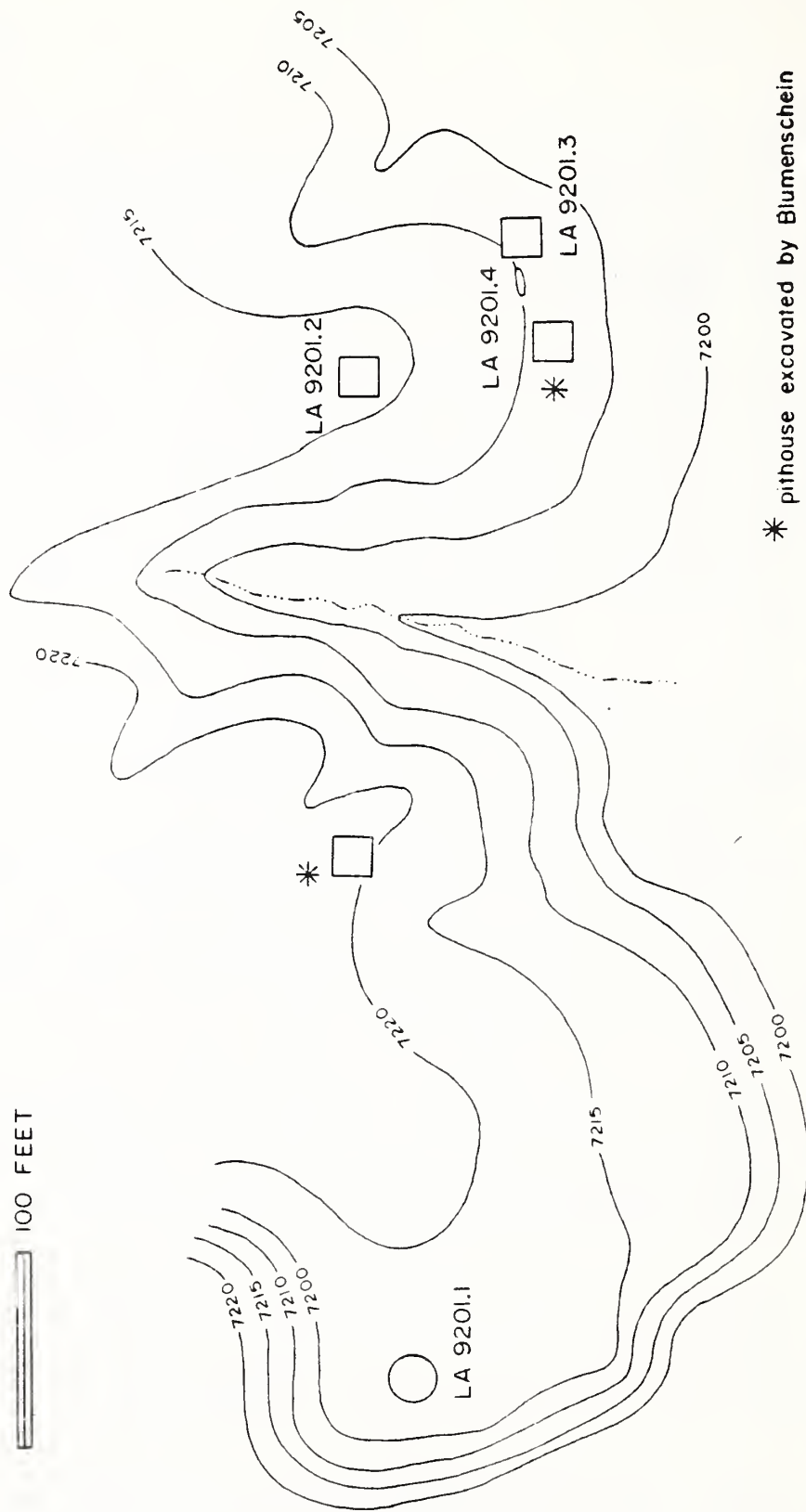


FIGURE 4 - Map Showing Location of Pithouses and Surface Structure of LA 9201

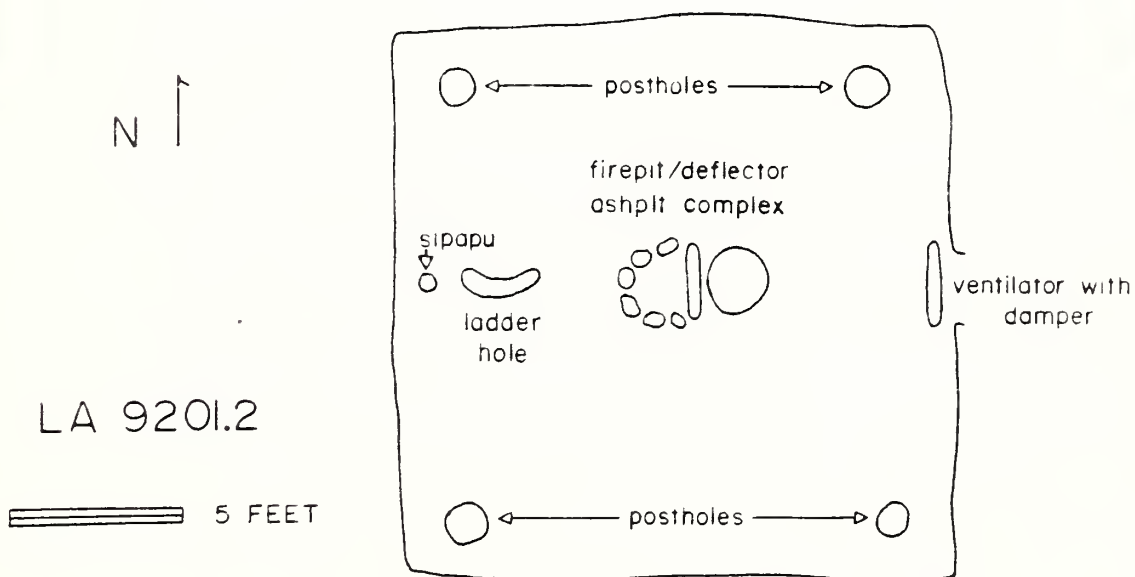
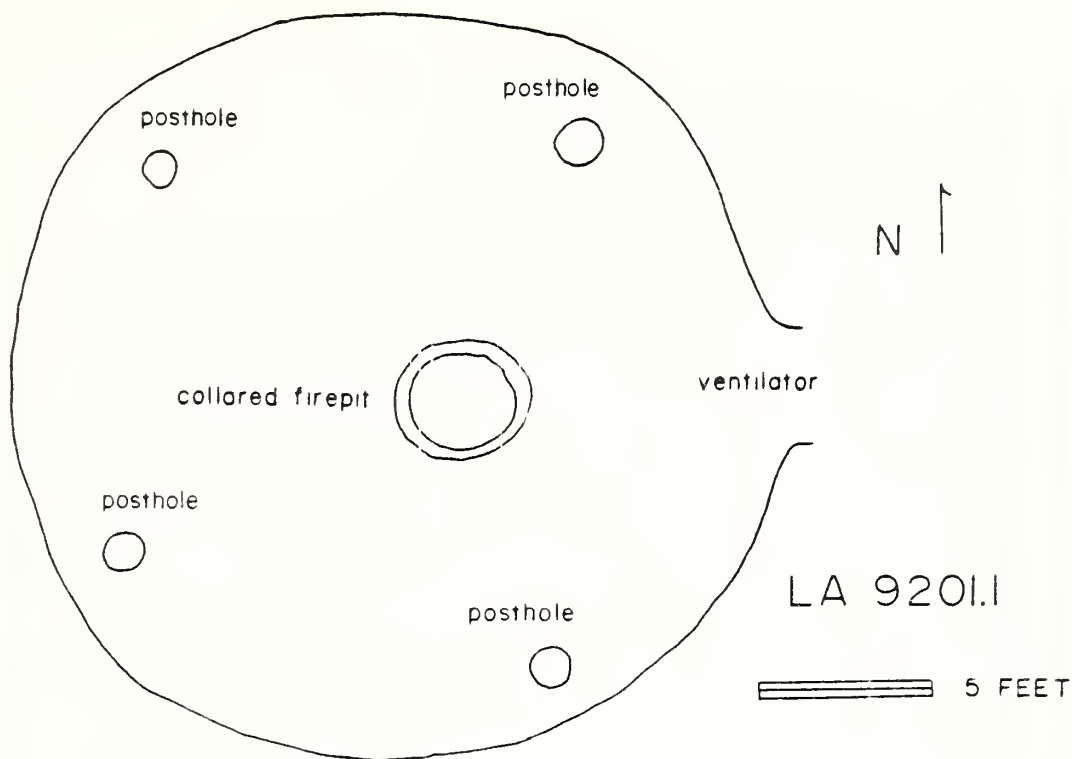


FIGURE 5 - Detail of LA 9201.1 (Pithouse) and LA 9201.2 (Pithouse Structure).

A mealing bin was located in the northeast corner of the room, with an adobe covered cist immediately to the west. The ventilator was located in the east wall.

Prehistoric renovation of the pithouse included replastering of the floor and the covering of the floor cist in the northeast corner. An adobe bench ran the circumference of the pithouse. Its construction had necessitated the covering of two wall cists in the northwest corner. They had been emptied and closed with stone clabs before or during renovation. A coping supported by a wooden lintel was added to the ventilator shaft at this time. The roof had been supported by four roof posts and four auxiliary posts. The auxiliary posts to the north were partially embedded in the bench, suggesting that they predated the renovation. In addition to the above, the walls had been lined with coursed adobe blocks. These had been placed in front of the old plastered wall while wet and had adhered to a series of wooden rods which had been impressed as supports into the old wall. Rods were common in the south wall and found scattered in the remaining walls.

In summary, the LA 9201 consisted of five pithouses and three possible surface structures. Two of the pithouses had been excavated by Blumenschein (1958) and the remaining three by the University of New Mexico in 1965. One of the three surface structures was also excavated. The other rock alignments east of LA 9201-01 and 02 were not investigated. The excavated surface structure associated with LA 9201-03 contained a firepit, manos and metates, and seemed to have been used as a living/work area. LA 9201-03 had possibly been remodeled into a kiva at a later time.

LA 9203 - (Fig. 7)

Surface indications of this site included sherd and lithic debris washed from a low mound with a central depression. Traces of a surface structure southeast of the pithouse were uncovered. A firepit and a number of ceramic vessels apparently associated with the unexcavated surface structure were located nearby.

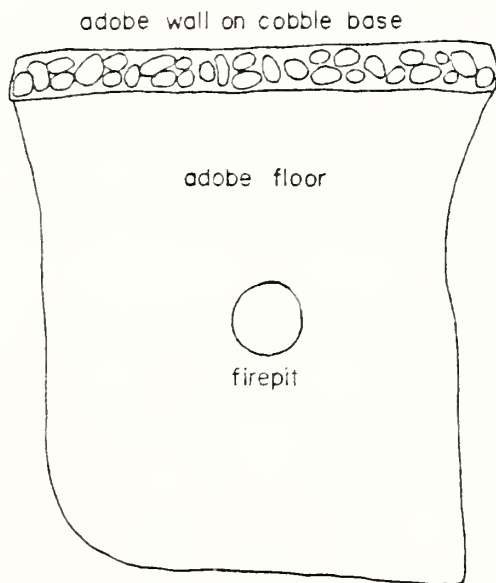
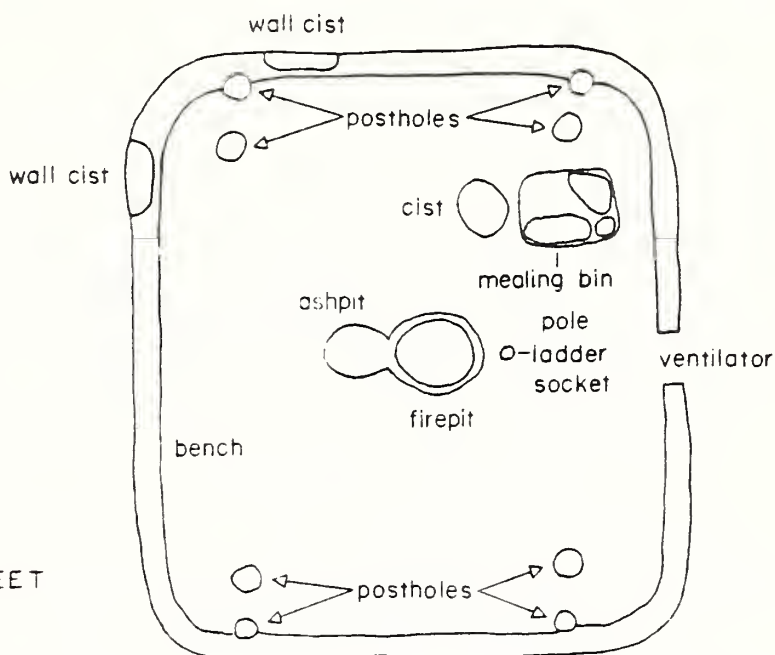
The pithouse was small, round, eight feet deep, and had four quadrilateral roof supports. It also contained a central, adobe-lipped circular firepit with an ashpit to the east and a ladder depression to the west. An eastern ventilator completed the pithouse features. Plaster was found on the floor and walls.

LA 9204 - (Fig. 8)

This site appears to have had two occupations. Located a mile northeast of LA 9205, near the ridge edge overlooking Lobo Creek, the sit

LA 9201.3

5 FEET



LA 9201.4

5 FEET

FIGURE 6 - Detail of LA 9201.3 (Pithouse) and LA 9201.4 (Surface Structure).

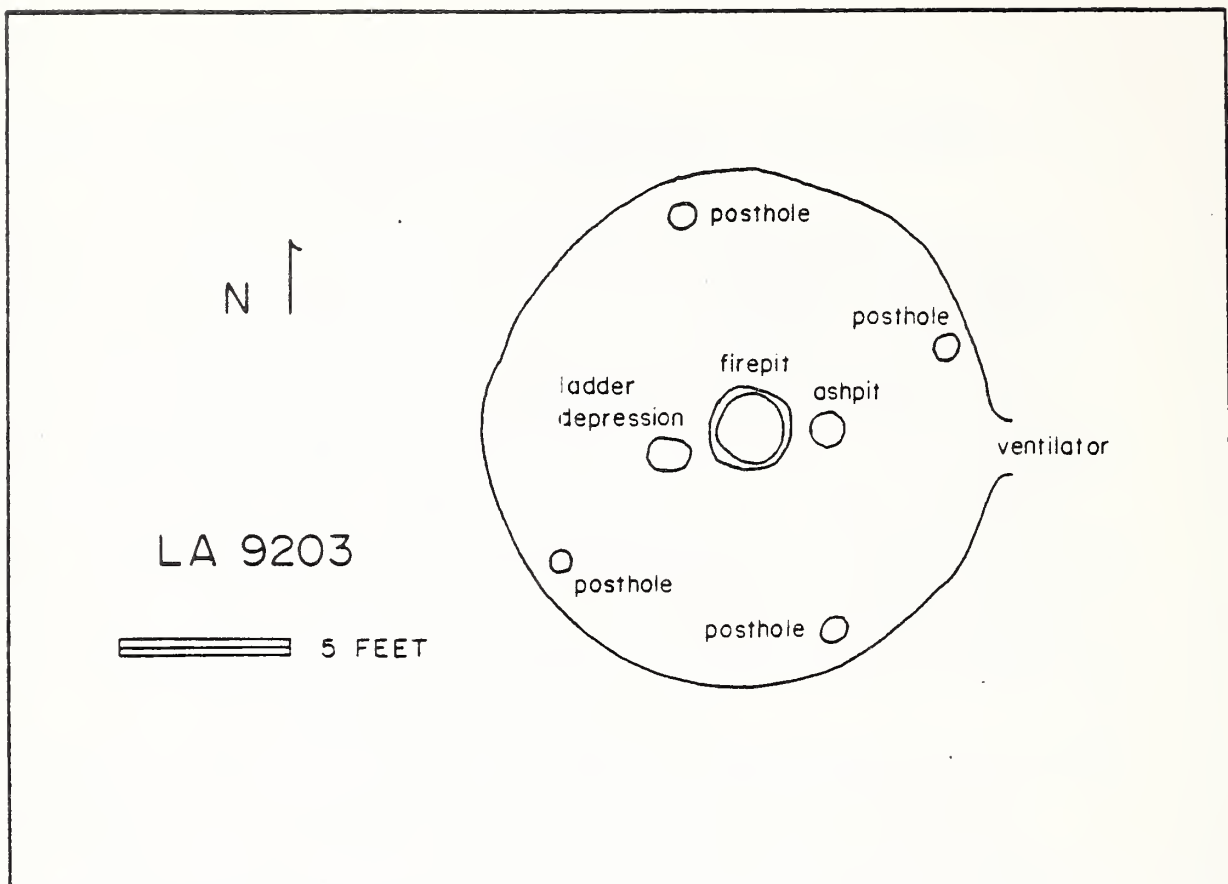


FIGURE 7 - Detail of LA 9203 (Pithouse)

consists of a pithouse which was later converted into a kiva, a four room surface structure, an outdoor utility area with hearths, and an outside, hard-packed adobe rimmed floor with a hearth.

The almost square pithouse was excavated seven feet eight inches into sterile soil. No wall plaster was found and the floor features had been destroyed in the renovation. A circular bench had been constructed around the periphery of the pithouse of sterile soil with adobe plaster on top. It was widest on the south wall and narrowed to five inches along part of the north wall. A hard brown clay wash along sides of the bench and over much of the floor was probably the remains of slumped wall plaster. The southwest corner of the bench contained an exposed adobe-lined semicircular cist. This was apparently a floor cist in the original pithouse which was partially destroyed by the renovation. It contained a Taos Grey bowl. Two inches above the bench in the south wall was an unplastered arched wall niche. A possible smaller niche was located in the north wall.

The southwest post hole of the quadrilateral roof support system contained one piece of turquoise and three projectile points. This post had also had an auxiliary support. Two depressions in the northwest and northeast corners were considered other possible auxiliary supports. The corresponding southern corners were too badly eroded to detect post holes.

The circular hearth (with adobe coping) had a deflector between it and the unlined ashpit to the northeast. Twin ventilator shafts, the smaller on top of the bench and the larger on the floor, were located in the east wall. The upper (and presumably earlier) ventilator had a wood reinforced adobe coping around the entrance. The shaft floor ran back one foot into the wall, behind which was a small ledge. Behind this the shaft floor sloped down to a bowl-shaped depression. The other ventilator was flush with the floor and had no lip or basin. This opening was in a direct line with the ashpit, deflector and hearth. No sipapu was found.

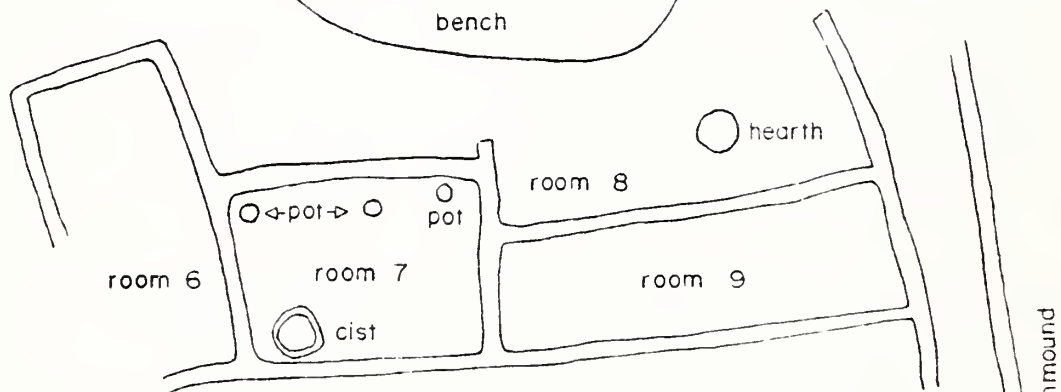
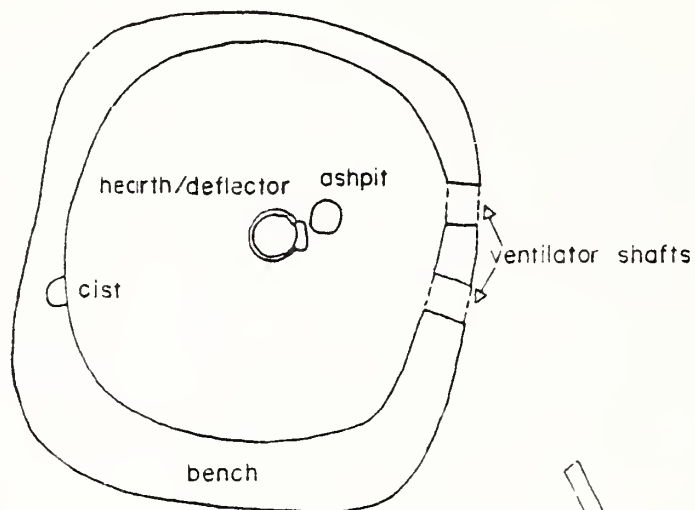
The total number of surface rooms is not known. A row of four contiguous rooms was excavated and there may have been more to the north, west and northwest of the pithouse. A trashmound to the east was excavated and found to contain a burial. The rooms were numbered six through nine. There were earlier, cobble-based walls running into and under the walls of Rooms 7 and 9. This indicated that these rooms might have been contemporaneous with the renovation of the pithouse. Room 6, very narrow, had lost its south wall. Room 7 was a small square storage room with adobe walls. The walls lacked a cobble base and were unplastered. Three Taos Grey pots had been set into the floor, and an adobe lined cist had been dug in the southwest corner. Room 8 was rectangular and had no discernible floor or north wall. A large

LA 9204

N ↑

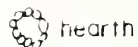
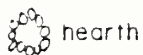
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PITHOUSE — KIVA



SURFACE STRUCTURE

UTILITY AREA



ADOBE FLOOR

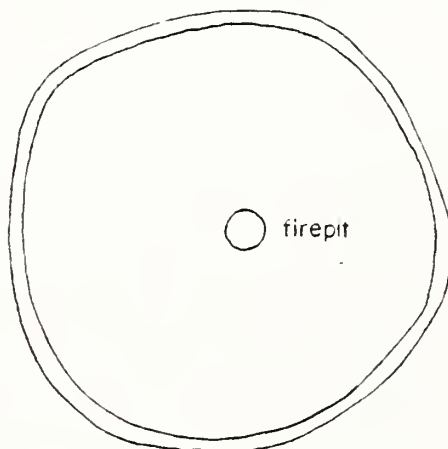


FIGURE 8 - Detail of LA 9204

adobe hearth had been placed in the room fill over sherds and a partial cloudblower. The south wall, of crude adobe turtle backs, was probably the earliest of the excavated walls. The hearth may have fallen from above. Room 9 had adobe walls and contained a Taos Grey pot.

A utility area containing two hearths separated these rooms from a structure termed a "dance floor" by the excavators. It consisted of a hard-packed adobe floor, was circular, and had a central adobe-lined firepit. An eroded adobe wall encircled the adobe floor. The excavators found no evidence of post holes or of a jacal structure around the floor, but this does not rule out the possibility that this was part of a jacal structure. The eroded wall could have originally been higher and contained post holes which have since eroded away (Fig. 8). The term "dance floor" should not be used since the function of this structure is unknown.

LA 9205 - (Fig. 9)

This site consisted of seven scattered architectural features and a number of refuse mounds. No pithouse was found. Features included three contiguous rectangular rooms, a stratified trash mound, several hearths, and a possible wall. The three rooms had cobble based walls. Two unlined storage cists were found between two of the walls (Fig. 9). The trash mound had thirteen levels differentiated by soil color and consistency but the excavators were unable to determine if these related to any particular construction period. East of these rooms were two hearths made of flat basalt slabs. Approximately sixty-eight feet west lay another hearth or possible cist constructed of upright slabs. A smaller hearth lay between this upright slab hearth (cist) and the rooms. Northeast of the rooms was a small trashpit consisting of an unlined pit and a stone circle. Directly north of the three defined rooms a rock wall --possibly part of another surface structure-- was identified. A small hearth lay east of this rock alignment.

This site seems to be a surface room occupation rather than a pithouse site. On the other hand, it is possible that the pithouse was not found since the entire site was not tested.

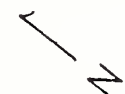
LA 9206 - (Fig. 10)

This site consists of a pithouse with a work area to the north, two contiguous living rooms to the northwest, a storage room to the west and hearths to the south.

The rectangular pithouse was dug into sterile soil to a depth of six feet ten inches. The walls had courses of plaster and slumping apparently occurred even during occupation. This necessitated patching near the southwest corner and on the east wall. The floor

LA 9205

10 FEET



possible wall

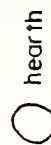
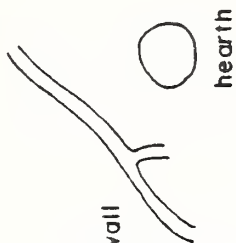


FIGURE 9 - Map of Site LA9205

consisted of two layers: a lower coat of light grey sand and clay two inches thick with a finishing coat of dark grey sand and clay one inch thick.

The four post holes showed evidence of having been packed with earth, adobe and rocks as support for the posts. Between one post hole and the hearth was a second post hole which had been partially dug and then filled with sterile yellow soil. Another post hole had been partially refilled and a flat rock placed in the bottom. The floor plaster had left collars around the post hole. All four post holes containing remnants of posts, charred and fragmentary.

Other features included a potrest, a possible ladder hole west of the central hearth, and an east oriented ventilator with damper. The ventilator had two openings. The first-- with a step entrance --had been abandoned and filled with debris. The second-- with adobe step and damper --was plasterless when excavated, but the fill contained some evidence of adobe plaster. The two shafts were connected by a small opening one and one half feet below the present ground surface. A hatch cover in the form of a large sheet of charred bark was found covering the hearth.

South of the pithouse was a work area containing seven hearths. To the west of the hearths was a small cobble based adobe storage room. The north wall was marked by a straight stone alignment, while the east and west walls were less distinct and the south wall was missing. Northwest of the pithouse was a cobble based two room adobe surface structure with hearths on either side of the common wall. Outside of the west wall, the cobbles formed an apron.

North of the pithouse was an utility area composed of hard-packed earth with three hearths and numerous small basin-like depressions (potrests?). Found on this surface were three large Taos Grey storage pots and a trough metate.

LA 9207 - (Fig. 11)

LA 9207 consists of a single pithouse, square with rounded corners and eight feet six inches in depth. The walls were unplastered while the floor consisted of well-packed adobe. Post holes were located in each corner. A circular firepit, somewhat off-center, was raised slightly off the floor and had a wide adobe coping. A deflector protected the firepit from drafts. The ventilator was located in the southeast wall. North of the pithouse was a rockpile. Excavators located a hard packed surface under this rockpile but were unable to determine whether or not this represented a surface structure.

LA 9206

N ↑

5 FEET

ADOBE SURFACE
STRUCTURE

UTILITY AREA with three
hearths and two potrests

storage room

PITHOUSE

WORK AREA with seven hearths

FIGURE 10 - Detail of LA 9206

LA 9207

N ↑



5 FEET

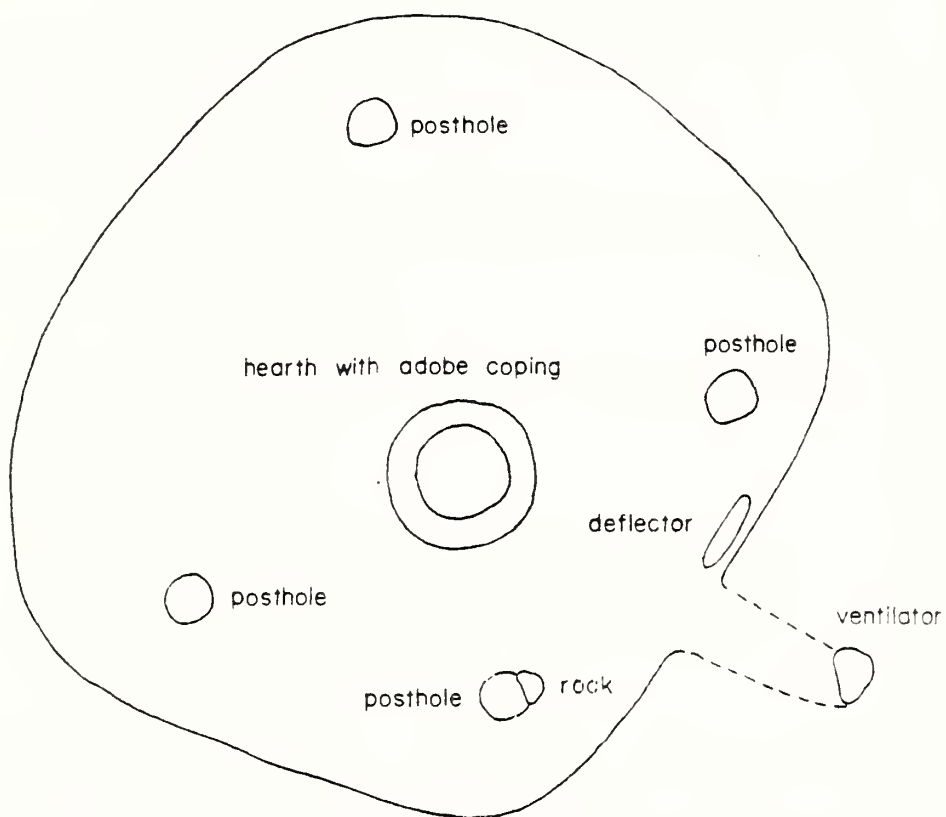


FIGURE 11 - Detail of LA 9207 (Pithouse)

LA 9208 - (Fig. 12)

A burned pithouse with two contiguous surface structures to the north was designated LA 9208. The pithouse was rectangular and excavated nine and one half feet into the ground (sand, caliche, and red clay). It was not determined if the walls had been plastered. The floor consisted of a dark grey clay. The hearth, roughly centered in a square area of burned plaster, was ringed with an adobe coping. The pithouse excavation was not completed before the end of the field session and no details of other floor features are available.

Discussion

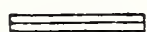
The Taos District had been considered by some (Wetherington 1968:5) to be a distinct sub-area within the Northern Rio Grande Anasazi Area. Architecturally, this appears to be borne out by the sites near Arroyo Hondo. Bullard (1962:174) lists the following as distinctive pithouse traits associated with the Anasazi architectural tradition as a whole:

- A standard arrangement of pithouses and surface structures forming "habitation units"
- Orientation between east and south
- Antechamber
- Ventilators
- Bench used as side support for roof
- Partitioning of front part of house
- Rounded clay fireplace with coping
- Deflector
- Ashpit
- Sipapu
- Heating pits
- Above-floor storage bins
- Sandstone slabs used in construction

Most of the above data used by Bullard came from areas to the west of the Rio Grande and none came from the Taos District. Pithouse development in the Rio Grande differs in a number of respects from this generalized pattern. Bullard (1962:178) recognized this, and noted that deflectors, partitions, and benches were missing in the Rio Grande area, while the ashpit often had an associated pair of small holes.

Skinner (1965) reported on the Sedillo Village in Albuquerque. This site contained ten pithouses, more or less round, eight of which contained a ventilator with damper rather than deflector. Adobe rimmed firepits were also common. Skinner (1965:21) feels there are three traits possibly distinctive to the Rio Grande: subsurface storage units, damper rather than deflector, and trash collected in areas

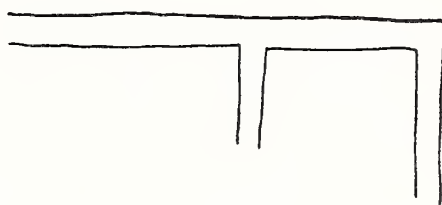
LA 9208



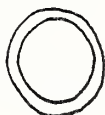
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SURFACE STRUCTURE



hearth with adobe coping



PITHOUSE

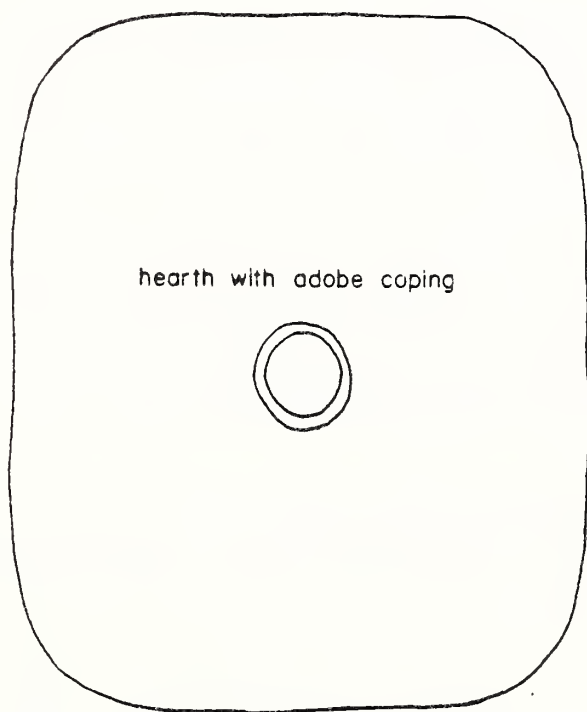


FIGURE 12- Detail of LA 9208 (Pithouse and Surface Structure -
uncompletely dug)

other than mounds. While the trash distribution may be only a local Albuquerque phenomenon, the other two traits do occur at Arroyo Hondo. The damper does not seem to have been replaced by a true deflector at Arroyo Hondo, although a small deflector does appear to be common between the ashpit and the firepit in a number of pithouses.

The report of the Denison site (Vivian and Clendenen 1965) contains not only a description of a pithouse village near Isleta, New Mexico, but also a summary of Rio Grande pithouses as of that date. The four pithouses of the Denison site were all roughly circular, and some had plastered floors and walls. Pithouse 1 had thin plastered walls with vertical rod reinforcing as did LA 9201-03. Pithouses 1, 2, and 3 had rectangular slab lined adobe rimmed firepits. Pithouse 2 also had an ashpit. Pithouses 1 and 2 had an east and south oriented ventilator, respectively. The ventilator for Pithouse 2 had a damper notch.

In summary of the Rio Grande pithouses, Vivian and Clendenen (1965:19) characterize the Basketmaker III period as having generally small shallow pithouses which may be circular, oval or rectangular with rounded sides. Common features include rimmed and unrimmed firepits, floor pits, and quadrilateral roof supports. Antechambers, sipapus, wall and floor plaster, warming ovens, step entries and east oriented ventilators also occur.

The Basketmaker III - Pueblo I period (Vivian and Clendenen 1965:25) saw pithouses becoming larger, deeper, and largely circular. The quadrilateral roof support and ventilator in the east wall continue. Ashpits and firepits occur in five instances; ladder holes and sipapus in four. There are three instances of wall and floor plaster and two of damper features.

Seven examples of Pueblo I - Pueblo II pithouses (Vivian and Clendenen 1965:25) show continuation of quadrilateral supports, east oriented ventilators, firepits, and plastered walls and floor. Ashpit and rimmed firepits decline to two examples while dampers increase to four as do ladder holes. The first instances of pole reinforced walls and wall niches occur. Surface rooms appear but are not common.

Pithouses in Pueblo II - Pueblo III times (Vivian and Clendenen 1965:26) become moderately large and deep. Wall and floor plaster, quadrilateral supports, east oriented ventilators, ashpits, rimmed firepits and sipapus continue. Post reinforced walls and a possible sipapu occur at the Sedillo site.

In a general way these descriptions fit the data from Arroyo Hondo. There are, however, differences which appear to occur only in the Taos District including benches, depth of pithouses, no step entries, single ladder hole and ashpit/deflector/firepit complexes.

Table 1 contains exact architectural dimensions. An investigation of previous work in the Taos District will supply more information and will allow the placement of the Arroyo Hondo material within its proper time perspective.

Wetherington (1968:75) calls the pithouse occupation of the Taos District the Valdez Phase (AD 1000-1200) after Green. Green (Green:75) identified the phase ceramically with the presence of Taos Black-on-White. Pithouses and small surface units of adobe construction are also characteristic. The Valdez Phase would fall within Vivian and Clendenen's Pueblo II - Pueblo III classification. The Valdez Phase is generally recognized as the earliest Pueblo occupation in the Taos area (Wetherington 1964:151). A description of the Valdez Phase sites so far published will demonstrate a close relationship with the sites at Arroyo Hondo discussed above. Following this description will be a discussion of how the Arroyo Hondo sites fit within the Northern Rio Grande pithouse architectural tradition.

In general, Valdez Phase pithouses range in size from seven to 17 feet in diameter, are generally circular but occasionally square. Ventilators are in the east wall and roof supports are quadrilateral. Sipapus are generally absent. The firepit/ashpit complex is generally circular, made of adobe and curbed. There are several examples of rectangular, slab-lined firepits. A small deflector between the firepit and the ashpit, and a damper in the ventilator are also common. Pithouses are deep, usually over five feet in depth (Wetherington 1968:79).

Sites are found in a number of locations, ranging from low terraces above water sources (less than 7000' elevation) to high ridges at elevations of 8000' (Wetherington 1964:152). The Arroyo Hondo sites fall into both patterns, with LA 9201 on a ridge overlooking the Rio Hondo and the others on a high ridge near the D. H. Lawrence Ranch. In addition, Wetherington (1964) mentions three general areas of site concentration during the Valdez Phase: in the Hondo Valley; on table land between Arroyo Seco and Rio Taos; and in the Ranchos de Taos area.

In the Rio Hondo area itself, information has been published on five pithouses. Excavated by Blumenschein (1958), these pithouses ranged in depth from six to eight feet. Four were square or nearly so, and had coursed adobe walls and puddled adobe floors. One was circular and had only two roof supports. It also had a possible sipapu and a single firepit. Two of the twelve houses excavated by Green in the Ranchos de Taos area were associated with surface rooms (Wetherington 1964:156). These surface units appeared to have been of coursed adobe with floors of packed clay or caliche.

TABLE 1 - ARCHITECTURAL DIMENSIONS

LA 9200	LA 9204 (continued)
Pithouse	Room 6
Room 1	Room 7
sub-floor cist	cist 28" diam.
Room 2	Room 8
Room 3	Room 9
	"dance floor" or jacal structure (?)
LA 9201	wall 3' hgt. 8" width
-01 pithouse	15' x 6'
-02 pithouse	10'6" x 7'
-03 pithouse	17'6" x 5'6"
bench 1' hgt. 10" deep	18' x 5'
-04 Room 1	18'10" x 18'11"
	6'10" depth
LA 9203	LA 9206
Pithouse	Pithouse
	Room
	Cobble apron
	14'3" x 12'11"
	7'5" x 8'1"
	12'7" x 19'1"
	8'6" depth
LA 9204	LA 9207
Pithouse	Pithouse
bench 1'8½" hgt.	Hearth coping
cist	14'2" x 13'
wall niche	6" width
ventilator shaft	
bowl-shaped depression 31" diam.	
lower opening 30½" width	
	LA 9208
	Pithouse
	Hearth
	Hearth coping
	25' x 21'
	22" diam.
	6" width
	Rooms - no dimensions available

Leubben (1968) reported on TA 32, a pithouse in the Taos area. Located at an elevation of 7400', this pithouse was oval and seven feet nine inches deep. The floor was partly plastered and there was a central rimmed firepit complex, a possible deflector, a ventilator to the east and four post holes. The walls were of coursed adobe and there was a small wing wall. There were four sets of aligned stones to the north of the pithouse.

Leubben also compiled a list of pithouse features found in the Taos area (1968: Table 3). A modification of his Table 3 follows, incorporating the new materials from the Rio Hondo Valley (Table 2).

It can be seen from Table 2 that the pithouses of the Arroyo Hondo area fit within the Valdez Phase (Wetherington 1964). There are some differences in emphasis, especially with regard to shape. The pithouses outside the Rio Hondo area appear to be largely oval while those in the Rio Hondo area tend to be largely rectangular or square. In addition, no rectangular firepits were found in these sites, while three have been identified near Rio Grande de Ranchos. The deflector/damper ratios are also different for the Arroyo Hondo sites, but this may be due to the failure of the excavators to recognize a fallen damper stone. Coursed adobe walls are also scarcer in the Rio Hondo area than elsewhere in the Taos District.

The surface structures described for Arroyo Hondo also conform to those described by Wetherington (1964) for the Valdez Phase. However, they seem more numerous than is indicated from previous excavations. It is possible that the transition to surface living took place earlier in the Rio Hondo area. The renovation of two pithouses into kiva-like structures (LA 9201-03 and LA 9204) would tend to support this view, especially since the later renovation appears to also fall within the Valdez Phase.

It might be noted in passing that the pithouse-surface structure complex excavated by Dittert (1961) in the Navajo Reservoir District has some resemblance to the structures described here. During the Rosa, Piedra, and Arboles Phases (AD 700-1050) pithouses up to eight feet deep are associated with cobble based jacal surface structures. Further investigation into the similarities between the two areas seems warranted.

TABLE 2 - COMPARISON OF ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES OF VALDEZ PHASE SITES

<u>Location -</u>	Rio Grande de Ranchos	Ranchos de Taos	Rio Hondo* (Blumenschein)	Rio Hondo (Brody)
<u>Feature</u>				
Total number				
Pithouses	9	1	5	9
Depth				
over 8'	6	0	3	5
under 8'	0	0	2	2
no data	3	1	0	2
Gtst Dimen.				
over 15'	5	0	3	6
under 15'	2	1	1	3
no data	2	0	1	0
Shape				
oval	9	1	1	2
rect.	0	0	4	3
square	0	0	0	4
Repair				
floor				
replaster	1	0	0	3
absent	1	0	0	6
no data	7	1	5	0
Wall				
reinforcing post	1	0	1	1
masonry	0	0	0	0
adobe	1	0	0	3
bench	0	0	0	2
absent	7	1	3	0
Floor Material				
sand w/plaster	1	0	0	1
heavy adobe	8	0	0	8
no data	0	1	5	0
Ashpit				
circular	4	1	0	9
rectangular	3	0	0	0
absent	1	0	5	0
no data	1	0	0	0
Deflector				
stone	6	0	0	3
absent	2	1	5	0
no data	1	0	0	6
Firepit w/raised rim				
rim	4	1	5	8
absent	5	0	0	1

TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)

<u>Location -</u>	Rio Grande de Ranchos	Ranchos de Taos	Rio Hondo* (Blumenschein)	Rio Hondo (Brody)
<u>Feature</u>				
Central firepit				
circular	6	1	5	9
rectangular	3	0	0	0
Ladder depressions				
depressions	5	0	1	5
absent	4	1	0	3
no data	0	0	4	1
Movable damper				
stone slab	6	0	1	2
absent	3	0	0	5
no data	0	1	4	1
Roof support				
4 post	9	1	1	8
2 post	0	0	1	0
no data	0	0	3	1
Sipapu				
present	3	0	0	1
absent	6	1	5	0
Footing trenches				
trenches	3	0	0	0
absent	2	0	5	0
no data	4	1	0	0
Lateral wing wall				
present	1	0	0	0
absent	8	1	5	9
Wall material				
coursed adobe	9	1	0	2
plastered earth	0	0	0	5
original earth	0	0	5	2
Ventilator in east wall	9	1	5	9

(Modified after Leubben 1968:Table 3)

* The sites excavated by Blumenschein (1958) are listed separately since the data for her sites is in some cases a duplication of later UNM Field School data.

Ceramics

Both painted and culinary wares were recovered from the Arroyo Hondo sites. The culinary wares will be discussed first, since they are the least complex. They appear to conform to the pattern identified in other sites of the Valdez Phase (Wetherington 1964:85).

Table 3 has been constructed in order to list the culinary wares, both by number of sherds recovered and by percentage of total ceramics. The basic description of Taos Grey follows that of Peckham (1968:14), with varieties within Taos Grey being recognized on the basis of surface decoration. The following varieties have been recognized at the Arroyo Hondo sites (Brody n.d.:11).

Taos Grey Neckbanded: This includes two sub-varieties: plain neckbanded and smeared neckbanded. Plain neckbanded is Taos Grey with wide bands around the neck and upper portion of the body. Smeared neckbanded is plain neckbanded with the bands partially obliterated by smearing.

Taos Grey Incised: This includes two sub-varieties: incised and incised banded. Incised is Taos Grey with complex patterns of short incisions over the upper part of the vessel. Herringbone patterns are most common, but hachuring and combinations of herringbone, or hachure patterns with line bands are known. Incised banded is either Taos Grey Neckbanded as described above with the addition of incised lines between each band, ranging from one-two cms. in width; or Taos Grey Plain with simulated neckbands described by incised lines. The topmost band is characteristically the widest.

Taos Grey Corrugated: Taos Grey with rough corrugations over the upper part of the vessel.

Taos Grey Scraped: Taos Grey with exterior surface scraped with grass and/or corncobs.

Taos Grey Punctate: Taos Grey with small punctate indentations in the neck area.

Taos Grey Basket-Imprinted: Taos Grey molded in baskets. Usually only bottom sections of vessel. Only individual sherds found to date.

Wetherington (1964:85) defines Ceramic Period I (correlated with the Valdez Phase) as containing Taos Grey culinary wares, both plain and incised, with Taos Grey Corrugated appearing towards the end of the period. He dates this from AD 1000-1200. Peckham (1968:14), on the other hand, mentions the presence of Taos Grey Neckbanded as well as

Taos Grey Incised and Taos Grey Corrugated. He suggests that incised decoration of parallel lines (incised banded) is earlier than the herringbone patterns (incised). In addition, he suggests the possibility that Taos Grey Neckbanded preceded Taos Grey Incised, with the latter (incised banded) being an imitation of the former.

Herold (1968:24-25) surveyed the Ranchos de Taos area and summarized the presence/absence of pottery types at surveyed sites. He ignored temporal variation. The summary is, therefore, not useful for determining ceramic temporal relationships. It also ignores quantity of each type per site, but it can give us some idea of popularity of each type. Taos Grey Plain appeared at 87 percent of the sites. Taos Grey Incised appeared at 67 percent, followed by Taos Grey Corrugated and then Taos Grey Neckbanded at 12 percent of all surveyed sites. Herold observed that Taos Grey Neckbanded appeared to occur early in the Northern Rio Grande area and remained present throughout the Pueblo occupation.

Culinary wares from Arroyo Hondo follow the above pattern, with Taos Grey Plain sherds common at all excavated sites. This may be partially explained by the fact that decoration on Taos Grey vessels is usually limited to the neck and upper body surface. The percentages of Taos Grey Plain sherds recovered range from a low of 61.5 percent at LA 9200 to a high of 88.63 percent at LA 9204.

Taos Grey Incised is next, ranging from 8.25 percent at LA 9203 to 33.02 percent at LA 9201-03. Incised banded (possibly the earliest form of Taos Grey Incised) is most common, perhaps indicating that the sites occupy the earlier part of Ceramic Period I.

Taos Grey Banded is third, ranging from 1.29 percent at LA 9205 to 13.08 percent at LA 9207. Within the Taos Grey Banded sherds, smeared banded appears to dominate over banded except at LA 9208 and LA 9204.

Taos Grey Corrugated was scarce in the Arroyo Hondo sites, appearing only at LA 9200 (.22%), LA 9201-01 (4.5%), LA 9201-02 (1.2%), LA 9204 (.01%), LA 9207 (.09%), and at LA 9208 (.01%). This would place the sites within Ceramic Period I as defined by Wetherington (1964:85).

In addition to these major diagnostic varieties, a number of other types occurred at some of the Arroyo Hondo sites. Taos Grey Scraped formed 3.56 percent of the ceramics at LA 9200 and was also present at LA 9204 (.48%), LA 9206 (1.57%), and at LA 9208 (.01%). Taos Grey Basket-Imprinted sherds were found at LA 9204 (.6%), and LA 9205 (.06%). Taos Grey Punctate sherds appeared at LA 9204 (.05%), LA 9205 (.18%), LA 9206 (.18%), and at LA 9208 (.04%).

TABLE 3 - UTILITY WARES*

SITE	LA 9200 Pit- house	Surface Structure	Total	LA 9201 -01 Pithouse	-02 Pithouse	-03 Pithouse	-04 Surface Structure	Totals -03-04
Pottery								
Taos Grey Plain	1801 (61.95)**	147 (56.53)	1948 (61.50)	843 (62.90)	382 (66.40)	811 (61.57)	72 (60.00)	883 (66.50)
Taos Grey Incised	631 (21.70)	67 (25.76)	698 (22.03)	262 (19.60)	149 (25.90)	435 (33.02)	28 (23.33)	463 (32.60)
Inc. Band.	628	64	692	261	115	320	28	348
Inc.	3	3	6	1	34	115	-	115
Taos Grey Banded	180 (6.18)	18 (6.91)	198 (6.24)	52 (3.90)	31 (5.40)	39 (2.96)	12 (10.00)	51 (3.50)
Plain Band.	67	8	75	-	-	-	-	-
Smear. Band.	113	10	123	52	31	39	12	51
Taos Grey Corrugated	7 (0.24)	-	7 (0.22)	60 (4.50)	7 (1.20)	-	-	-
Taos Grey Scraped	113 (3.88)	-	113 (3.56)	-	-	-	-	-
Other Taos Grey	8 (0.27)	4 (1.53)	12 (0.37)	-	-	6 (0.45)	-	6 (0.40)
Taos Grey Basket Imp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Taos Grey Punctate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
All B/W	167 (5.74)	24 (9.23)	191 (6.03)	122 (9.10)	6 (1.00)	26 (1.97)	8 (6.66)	34 (2.40)

* In some cases sites have not been broken down into components or have been only partially broken down into components because of disruption of materials during storage. In the cases of LA 9204, LA 9206, and LA 9207 the breakdown must be treated as only approximate.

** Percentage of total ceramic inventory.

TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)

SITE	LA 9203 Pithouse	Surface Structure	Total	LA 9204 Pithouse	Surface Structure	Total	LA 9205 Total
Pottery							
Taos Grey Plain	1668 (80.10)	1132 (78.80)	2800 (78.67)	966 (81.72)	397 (82.70)	15020 (88.63)	5867 (85.40)
Taos Grey Incised	156 (7.50)	138 (9.60)	294 (8.25)	168 (14.21)	73 (15.20)	1521 (8.96)	742 (10.79)
Inc. Band.	109	86	195	22	47	206	355
Inc.	47	52	99	146	26	1315	357
Taos Grey Banded	67 (3.20)	13 (0.90)	80 (2.24)	37 (3.12)	9 (1.86)	250 (1.47)	79 (3.81)
Plain Band.	-	-	-	13	7	134	-
Smear. Band.	67	13	80	24	2	116	-
Taos Grey Corrugated	-	-	-	-	-	2 (0.01)	-
Taos Grey Scraped	-	-	-	2 (0.16)	1 (0.20)	83 (0.48)	-
Other Taos Grey	48 (2.30)	27 (1.80)	75 (2.10)	1 (0.08)	-	4 (0.02)	-
Taos Grey Basket Imp.	-	-	-	7 (0.59)	-	28 (0.60)	-
Taos Grey Punctate	-	-	-	1 (0.08)	-	9 (0.05)	-
All B/W	143 (6.90)	167 (8.80)	310 (8.71)	-	-	28 (0.16)	-

TABLE 3 (CONTINUED)

SITE	LA 9206 Pithouse	Surface Structure	Total	LA 9207 Pithouse	Total	LA 9208 Total
Pottery						
Taos Grey Plain	2078 (77.56)	70 (47.94)	7013 (80.13)	500 (65.27)	725 (68.01)	4534 (78.61)
Taos Grey Incised	262 (9.77)	30 (20.53)	778 (9.04)	148 (19.31)	178 (16.64)	659 (11.41)
Inc. Band.	166	22	490	137	162	478
Inc.	96	8	288	11	16	186
Taos Grey Banded	87 (3.23)	14 (9.51)	265 (3.02)	100 (13.05)	139 (13.03)	409 (7.08)
Plain Band.	42	4	123	25	42	350
Smear.Band.	45	10	142	75	97	59
Ω Taos Grey Corrugated	-	-	-	-	1 (0.09)	1 (0.01)
Taos Grey Scraped	161 (6.00)	2 (1.36)	138 (1.57)	-	-	1 (0.01)
Other Taos Grey	11 (0.40)	3 (2.05)	332 (3.79)	4 (0.52)	4 (0.37)	2 (0.03)
Taos Grey Basket Imp.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Taos Grey Punctate	9 (0.33)	-	16 (0.18)	-	-	2 (0.03)
All B/W	64 (2.38)	27 (18.49)	209 (2.38)	14 (1.82)	19 (1.78)	159 (2.75)

There seems little question that on the basis of culinary sherds alone, the Arroyo Hondo sites fall within Ceramic Period I (Valdez Phase). Large amounts of Taos Grey Banded sherds and very slight amounts of Taos Grey Corrugated would suggest a date for these sites in the earlier part of the Valdez Phase.

Painted Wares: Discussion of the painted wares has been left until last because of the occurrence of significant amounts of Red Mesa B/W (Table 4). According to Wetherington (1964:85) Taos B/W should be the sole painted ware for Ceramic Period I. The definition of Taos B/W as given by Peckham (1968:10) and referenced by Wetherington (1964:93) is accepted here. Peckham dated Taos B/W from AD 1150-1250, while Wetherington accepted dates of AD 1000-1350. Ellis and Brody (1964:324) place the beginnings of Taos B/W as early as AD 900, making it the diagnostic ware of their Complex I. At this point it is unclear which beginning date for Taos B/W is more likely to be accurate, since none of the above give reasons for their dating of this ceramic type. This adds to the confusion which faces us when we look at the Red Mesa B/W sherds found at Arroyo Hondo.

Wetherington (1964:97) does not accept the presence of Red Mesa B/W and suggests that the occasional reported instances of Kwahe'e B/W are questionable. Peckham (1968:10), however, found not only Kwahe'e B/W near Ranchos de Taos, but also what he termed Kwahe'e-Red Mesa B/W. Skinner (1965) also found Red Mesa B/W associated with Taos Grey wares at the Sedillo site in Albuquerque. None of the later painted wares (i.e. Santa Fe B/W, Talpa B/W, etc.) were found at the Arroyo Hondo sites. Both Kwahe'e B/W and Kwahe'e-Red Mesa B/W would seem to precede Taos B/W somewhat in time and Red Mesa B/W has been suggested as possibly ancestral to Taos B/W (Brody n.d.:12). If this is true, then the Arroyo Hondo sites may be the earliest Pueblo sites yet encountered in the Taos District. It is possible, however, that Red Mesa B/W is intrusive into the Taos District and is not intimately connected with the development of Taos B/W. This does not affect the suggestion that these are early sites.

To further confuse the issue, Wetherington (1964:201) felt that the occupation of the Rio Grande during the time when Kwahe'e B/W and Red Mesa B/W were coexistent was limited to the lower half of the Santa Fe District and the adjacent Albuquerque District. This has to be at least modified by the evidence uncovered at Arroyo Hondo. It becomes evident that some sort of occupation extended into the Taos District during the time when Red Mesa B/W and Kwahe'e B/W were coexistent in the Rio Grande. Whether this also extends the time span of these ceramic types remains to be determined.

TABLE 4 - PAINTED WARES

Pottery	Taos B/W	Red Mesa B/W	Unidentified B/W	All Taos Grey
Site				
LA 9200	86 (2.4)**	42 (1.3)	73* (2.0)	2976 (94.3)
LA 9201-01	27 (2.8)	10 (0.8)	85 (6.4)	1217 (90.0)
LA 9201-02	- -	- -	6 (1.0)	569 (99.0)
LA 9201-03-04	14 (1.0)	11 (0.8)	9 (0.6)	1403 (97.6)
LA 9203	142 (4.0)	26*** (0.7)	142 (4.01)	3249 (89.9)
LA 9204	26 (0.16)	- -	- -	16917 (99.84)
LA 9205	143 (2.09)	1 -	- -	6688 (97.91)
LA 9206	200 (2.38)	3 -	6 -	8542 (97.62)
LA 9207	13 (1.21)	6 (0.56)	- -	1047 (98.23)
LA 9208	152 (2.63)	7**** (0.12)	- -	5608 (97.25)

* Includes one bowl with White Mound-like design

** Percentage of total ceramic inventory

*** Does not include two whole canteens

**** Does not include two whole Red Mesa vessels

Peckham (1957:47) has questioned the validity of Red Mesa B/W as a time indicator owing to its long time span. Gladwin (1945:63) dated Red Mesa B/W from AD 870-930, and while he did not feel it was an active agent in the formation of the early Rio Grande wares (1945:146) it was later suggested by Skinner (1965) to be of some importance. Tree ring dates (Breternitz 1966) indicate that Red Mesa B/W had a longer time span than that originally accorded it by Gladwin. Breternitz (1966:90) gives a tentative beginning date for Red Mesa B/W as AD 850. Red Mesa B/W, according to Breternitz, lasts until AD 1050 with a later variant (Late Red Mesa B/W) extending to AD 1125. Using these dates, the occurrence of Red Mesa B/W in the Valdez Phase becomes more acceptable. However, it would be valuable to determine just how late Red Mesa B/W existed in the Taos District and just how early Taos B/W occurs, in order to better clarify the relationship between the two.

Other Artifacts

In addition to the foregoing, a number of other artifacts were recovered in the course of excavation. Table 5 has been prepared to give the number of each type of artifact recovered from each site.

Table 6 lists artifacts by type and breaks each type down into more informative categories. Classification follows Kidder (1932). Chipped stone tools, including projectile points, scrapers, knives, graters, choppers, axes, and cores were also classified as to material. The material classification indicates that basalt was the most commonly utilized material, followed by chert and obsidian in almost equal quantities. Other materials are uncommon. The presence of basalt in tool utilization is easily explained as it is a common material throughout the whole study area, occurring both as outcrops and as large cobbles.

Artifacts other than chipped stone were listed in terms of distinguishing characteristics. Again, Kidder's Artifacts of Pecos (1932) was used as a classificatory reference. Of interest are the large number of odd-shaped slabs containing the remnants of red ochre. It has been postulated that these may have been used as paint palettes. Other unusual artifacts include a tabular schist phallic symbol from LA 9200 and a possible tuff figurine from LA 9203. A ground stone ball from LA 9203 appears similar to one illustrated by Kidder (1932:61). He considers this type of stone ball to be the result of excess wear.

TABLE 5 - TYPES AND NUMBERS OF ARTIFACTS RECOVERED FROM EACH SITE

Site	LA 9200	LA 9201	LA 9203	LA 9204	LA 9205	LA 9206	LA 9207	LA 9208
Artifact								
Proj. Points	43	24	11	58	39	71	13	31
Point Blanks	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0
Scrapers	30	22	12	19	68	11	3	3
Knives	21	8	10	10	23	13	3	7
Gravers	6	1	0	0	5	0	0	1
Drills	0	0	2	1	5	6	1	1
Choppers	2	4	0	3	2	0	0	0
Axes	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Cores	3	0	0	12	0	0	0	0
Covers	6	3	3	7	0	1	0	0
Lap Anvils	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slabs	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Manos	13	1	5	25	3	10	2	7
Metates	4	1	2	6	1	2	0	0
Hammerstones	4	3	0	4	2	0	0	0
Mauls	1	1	0	2	0	0	1	0
Pot Polishers	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Polishing Stones	1	3	0	6	11	2	1	0
Shaft Smoothers	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1
Sharpening Stones	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Paint Palettes	1	0	3	1	0	1	0	0
Jewelry	1	4	1	1	2	1	0	0
Other*	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Red Ochre	3	0	1	6	0	4	0	0
Minerals	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	3
Stone & Clay Balls	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
Cloudblowers/Pipe	6	8	5	10	5	6	0	0
Awls	2	0	9	8	3	4	1	2
Whistles	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Antler Rasps	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tines w/Chisel Edge	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Tines w/Other Edge	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Scapuls (worn)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Worked Rib	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

* A tabular schist phallic symbol from LA 9200 and possible tuff figurine from LA 9203.

TABLE 6 - FURTHER ARTIFACT BREAKDOWN

A.

	Basalt	Jasper	Obsidian	Quartzite	Chert	Chalc.	Wood	Petr.	Agate	Slate	Unid.	Totals
Proj. Point												290*
serrated	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7
notched	52	2	13	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	6	81
stemmed	15	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
triangular	42	1	9	2	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	57
Point Blanks												4
Scrapers	128	3	14	1	19	0	1	1	1	0	0	168**
Knives	0	1	5	2	11	1	0	0	0	0	3	95
Gravers	10	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Choppers	8	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	11
Axes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2***
Cores	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
Hammerstones	6	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Mauls	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5

* 41 points were lost in the field and are not included in the table. There are 214 complete, 58 fragmentary and 18 projectile point bases. Three J-points and 1 Eden base were also recovered.

** Includes large end and side scrapers and small "thumbnail" scrapers.

*** Probably tuff and sandstone.

TABLE 6 - FURTHER ARTIFACT BREAKDOWN (CONTINUED)

B. Other Artifacts

Manos	66	Bird Bone Whistle	4
fragmentary	35	Pendants	7
one hand	13	turquoise	3
two hand	18	shell	2
Open End Trough		unidentified	2
Metates	16	Beads	2
Polishers	26	Ear Bob - Turq.(?)	1
floor	24	Balls	3
pot	2	incised clay	1
Shaft Smoothers	3	plain clay	1
Drills	16	ground stone	1
straight shaft	2	Lightning Stone (?)	1
wide base	7	Cloudblowers	24
modif. pt.	1	heavy/fat	8
fragments	6	round/slim	13
Worked Slabs	14	w/lip	1
cist cover	9	w/everted	
hatch cover (bark)	1	lip	1
pot cover	1	short/fat*	1
fragments	3	Elbow Pipes	2
Awls	34		
splinter	8		
head split	8		
head partly			
worked	4		
head removed	2		
fragments	11		

All classification based on Artifacts of Pecos, A. V. Kidder (1932).

* Not represented as a type in Artifacts of Pecos.

An incised clay ball from LA 9206 and another plain clay ball from LA 9208 have problematic functions.

Of especial interest are the quartz crystals, cloudblowers, and possible lightning stone recovered at a number of the sites. Eddy (1974:82) has termed these "material items which may have been associated with control of the weather." He further states, "this magical ritual may have related to control of weather more for dry farming away from the rivers, than for floodplain agriculture, which is not dependent upon local atmospheric conditions." Although he is speaking of the Navajo Reservoir area, similarities with the Arroyo Hondo area exist. With one exception (LA 9201) the Arroyo Hondo sites are located away from the river, on a ridge overlooking intermittent Lobo Creek. Agriculture under such conditions would have to be of a dry farming nature unless the inhabitants made trips to riverside fields. Assuming dry farming and fluctuating environmental conditions (Schoenwetter n.d. and later discussions), attempts at supernatural weather control would be expected. It is important to note that these items (quartz crystals, cloudblowers, lightning stones) came from all sites with the exceptions of LA 9207 and LA 9208 (and excavation of LA 9208 was not completed). Quartz crystals are recorded from LA 9205 and LA 9206, with a possible lightning stone from LA 9206. The twenty-four cloudblowers represented a number of types, including two with lips (one everted) and one with spiral incising. The possibility should be considered that the inhabitants of Arroyo Hondo used these items in attempts at weather control.

Burials

Two burials were recovered from the Arroyo Hondo sites excavated by the University of New Mexico. The first was recovered during the 1965 field season at LA 9200. The skeleton was sent to Eric K. Reed, then Research Archaeologist for the Southwestern Region of the National Park Service, and the following is taken from his report (1966). The burial from LA 9200 represents an adult male Pueblo Indian (Southwest Plateau Type), of 45 to 50 years of age at death, about 165.5 cm. tall, with fairly pronounced artificial cranial deformation, at a lambdoid or intermediate angle. There were no other observable features of special interest. Found under a rock cairn on the pithouse floor, the skeleton was in extremely poor condition.

The second burial came from LA 9204 and was studied by Anna Moore, a graduate student at the University of New Mexico. Her report (1967) states that the burial came from the trash mound east of the surface structure and pithouse-kiva designated LA 9204. It represents

a mature adult male Pueblo Indian (Southwest Plateau Type) over 50 years old. He was about 162.7 cm. tall and had moderate lambdoidal cranial deformation. The burial was in fairly good condition and was almost complete (a number of bones of the left side, that nearest the surface, were missing or slightly damaged). Both skeletons were turned over to the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology at the University Of New Mexico.

Conclusions

The sites excavated by the University of New Mexico Field School in 1965 and 1967 have raised a number of questions about the prehistory of the Taos District. These questions involve the pottery inventory and ceramic chronology of the region, and the validity of current age estimates for settlement in the area. Some attempt will be made here to suggest possible means of answering these questions.

The presence of Red Mesa B/W in the sites cannot be denied. The question of whether or not Red Mesa B/W was manufactured locally does not affect the fact that the type was part of the cultural inventory of the sites excavated and must be explained in those terms. If we accept Breternitz's (1966:90) dating of Red Mesa B/W to its most conservative terminal date (AD 1050), we are within the time span accorded the Valdez Phase by Wetherington (1964:146). However, if we accept Ellis and Brody's (1964) early date of AD 900 for Taos B/W, we are left with the possibility that the Arroyo Hondo sites are earlier than generally accepted for the Taos District (see Wetherington 1964:146).

There are no C14 dates from these sites. Several dendro samples were submitted to the Laboratory of Tree Ring Research in Tucson, but results are not yet available. Eight archaeomagnetic samples were taken by Robert DuBois in 1967, and these have been processed. Unfortunately, only one of the samples was adequate for dating purposes (DuBois 1973:personal communication). The one good sample came from a hearth in LA 9205. Since LA 9205 has been interpreted as a utility area and has no pithouse we cannot assume contemporaneity with the other pithouse sites. Indeed, this site has been interpreted as being somewhat later in time than the other Arroyo Hondo sites. The date obtained by DuBois (DuBois 1973:personal communication) is 1120± 25 AD, well within the Valdez Phase and very close to the end date for Red Mesa B/W. It should be noted that only one Red Mesa B/W sherd was recovered and it came from the surface of LA 9205.

Evidence for an earlier date for the pithouse sites is suggested by pollen analysis (Schoenwetter n.d.). His results offer the most

satisfactory solution to the question of the age of the sites discussed above. Samples from LA 9201 seemed to indicate that precipitation values for the site area during the period of occupancy were significantly lower than they are today. A sample from LA 9200 indicated similar conditions during the early and late parts of the occupation, with conditions approaching those of the present during the mid-occupancy period (Table 7 for actual pollen counts). Regional studies suggest that this sequence must begin no earlier than AD 700 and end no later than AD 1300 (Schoenwetter n.d.:3). By correlation with the Largo Canyon and Chuska Valley sequences, Schoenwetter (n.d.:4) dates LA 9201 and LA 9200 within the AD 850-950 time period. Specifically he suggests that the floor of feature five at LA 9200 dated between AD 850-875; the cist below the floor of feature seven between AD 875-900; and the floor of feature seven between AD 900-950. The floors of feature two and three at LA 9200 are probably not contemporaneous in time but the former dates between AD 850-875 and the latter between AD 900-950. He also observes that conditions during the time period may well have offered an advantage in length of growing season that might have offset the period of relative drought between AD 850-875 and AD 900-950.

Although Schoenwetter's data came from only two sites, it does offer an interesting solution to the temporal dilemma posed at Arroyo Hondo. Accepting his dates, we could accept Ellis and Brody's contention that Taos B/W dates as early as AD 900. Breternitz's dating of Red Mesa B/W as extending until AD 1125 solves the problem of Red Mesa B/W in the Taos District. With Red Mesa B/W lasting so late there is no chronological problem involved in its presence. The Valdez Phase could be given a slight earlier date (i.e. AD 950) than that used by Wetherington (1964), and the only problem left to be analyzed involves the relationship between Red Mesa B/W and Taos B/W. This can be solved by a detailed study of the two ceramic types to determine specifically if Red Mesa B/W was manufactured locally or was a trade ware. This study has yet to be undertaken. It is hoped that this paper may serve as a stimulus to such a study.

TABLE 7 - POLLEN STATISTICS OF ANALYZED SAMPLES *

	9201-0	9201-2	9201-3-21	Floor Fea. 3	Floor Fea. 2	Floor Fea. 5	Cist. Fea. 7	1st floor Fea. 7
<i>Pinus edulis</i>	121	34	43	9	22	2	16	6
<i>P. ponderosa</i>	3	62	33	6	2	1	10	4
<i>Juniperus</i>	19	31	29	26	2	19	15	4
<i>Quercus</i>	4	5	6	7	8	5	8	2
<i>Picea</i>	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Chenopodiaceae</i>	20	20	29	48	36	19	14	10
<i>Artemisia</i>	14	16	15	52	15	12	9	6
<i>Gramineae</i>	13	10	19	15	4	27	13	10
<i>Compositae</i>	5	19	22	30	10	15	16	8
<i>Ephedra N</i>	0	3	1	2	1	0	0	0
<i>Ephedra T</i>	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Unknowns	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0
N	200	200	200	200	100	100	100	50
<i>Ambrosieae</i>	1	3	3	11	6	1	4	1
<i>Sarcobatus</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Zea</i>	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
AP%	66.0	73.5	57.0	24.0	34.0	27.0	49.0	32.0
	Surface Samples			LA 9201		LA 9200		

* Schoenwetter (n.d.:2) feels that only one of the five samples above was completely satisfactory for analysis. The number of pollen grains in three others may or may not have been sufficient for analysis statistically. One sample was definitely suspect statistically. The three surface samples served as controls.

TABLE 8 - SITE NUMBER CORRELATIONS

Museum of New Mexico Number	Forest Service Number
LA 9200	Private Land
LA 9201	Private Land
LA 9203	AR-03-02-07-27
LA 9204	AR-03-02-07-28
LA 9205	AR-03-02-07-29
LA 9206	AR-03-02-07-30
LA 9207	AR-03-02-07-31
LA 9208	AR-03-02-07-32

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to acknowledge the help and encouragement of Dr. Linda S. Cordell, without whose help this manuscript would never have been completed. Thanks are due Dr. W. James Judge for his helpful criticism and editing of the uncompleted manuscript. Dr. J. J. Brody was kind enough to turn over materials from his 1965 and 1967 University of New Mexico Field School excavations to the author. The author is also indebted to Ms. Susan McLean, who drafted the figures. Work was conducted under permit from the United States Forest Service. Special thanks is extended to the Carson National Forest and the Questa Ranger District. Lastly, the author wishes to acknowledge the financial support of the University of New Mexico Graduate Student Association which made possible a number of trips to the study area.

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